School Quality Review Report

Marquette Montessori Academy

South Bend Community School Corporation

March 27-28, 2018

Review Team Members

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I. Background on the School Quality Review

Public Law 221 (PL 221) was passed in 1999 before the enactment of the federal *No Child Left behind Act* (NCLB). It serves as the state's accountability framework. Among other sanctions, the law authorizes the Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) to assign an expert team to conduct a School Quality Review for schools placed in the lowest category or designation of school performance for two consecutive years.

> *(a) The board shall direct that the department conduct a quality review of a school that is subject to IC 20-31-9-3. (b) The board shall determine the scope of the review and appoint an expert team under IC 20-31-9-3. (Indiana State Board of Education; 511 IAC 6.2-8-2; filed Jan 28, 2011, 3:08 p.m.: 20110223-IR-511100502FRA)*

The school quality review (SQR) is a needs assessment meant to evaluate the academic program and operational conditions within an eligible school. The SQR will result in actionable feedback that will promote improvement, including the reallocation of resources or requests for technical assistance. The process is guided by a rubric aligned to the United States Department of Education's "Eight Turnaround Principles" (see Appendix B). The school quality review includes a pre-visit analysis and planning meeting, onsite comprehensive review, and may include targeted follow-up visits.

State law authorizes the SBOE to establish an expert team to conduct the School Quality Review known as the Technical Assistance Team (TAT). Membership must include representatives from the community or region the school serves; and, may consist of school superintendents, members of governing bodies, teachers from high performing school corporations, and special consultants or advisers.

II. Overview of the School Quality Review Process

The School Quality Review process is designed to identify Marquette Montessori Academy's strengths and areas for improvement organized around the United States Department of Education's Eight School Turnaround Principles. In particular, the School Quality Review process focused on three Turnaround Principles that were identified as priorities by the school and its district.

The on-site review consisted of the Technical Assistance Team (TAT) visiting the school for two days. During the two days, the TAT (1) conducted separate focus groups with students, teachers, parents, and community members (2) observed a professional learning community meeting with teachers, (3) observed instruction in classrooms, and (4) interviewed school and district leaders.

Prior to the visit, teachers completed an online survey, with 18 of 21 teachers participating. Parents and family members were also invited to complete a survey; 100 completed this survey. Finally, the school leadership team completed a self-evaluation. Both surveys and the self-evaluation are made up of questions that align to school improvement principles and indicators (Appendix B).

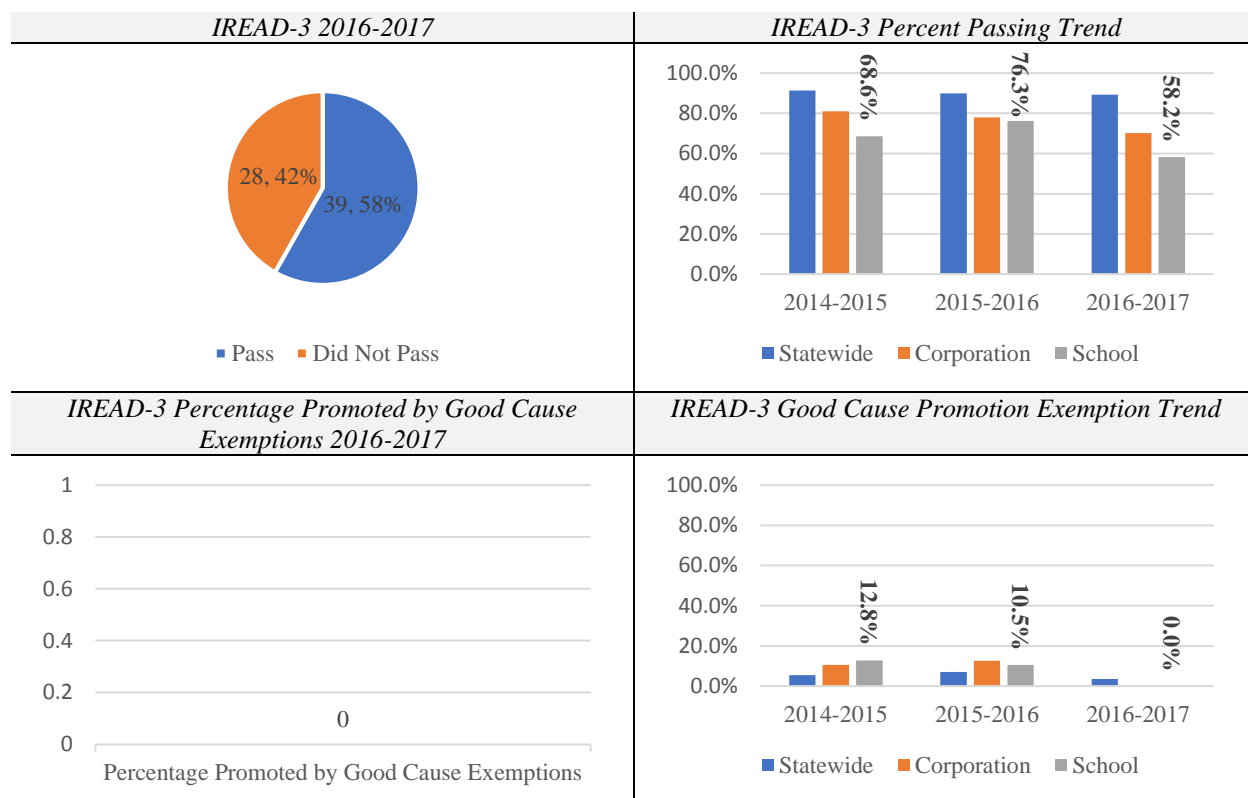## III. Data Snapshot for Marquette Montessori Academy

School Report Card							
2015-2016 Report Card	*Points*	*Weight*	*Weighted Points*	*2016-2017 Report Card*	*Points*	*Weight*	*Weighted Points*
Performance Domain Grades 3-8	33.60	.5	16.80	*Performance Domain Grades 3-8*	32.20	1	32.20
Growth Domain Grades 4-8	85.60	.5	42.80	*Growth Domain Grades 4-8*	0	0	0
Overall Points			59.6	*Overall Points*			32.2
Overall Grade			F	*Overall Grade*			F

Enrollment 2017-2018: 451 students

Enrollment 2017-2018 by Ethnicity

26, 5%
44, 9%
222, 47%
156, 33%
26, 6%

■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ White ■ Multiracial ■ Asian

Enrollment 2017-2018 by Free/Reduced Price Meals

137, 30%
275, 61%
39, 9%

■ Free Meals ■ Reduced Price Meals ■ Paid Meals

Enrollment 2017-2018 by Special Education

89, 19%
382, 81%

■ Special Education ■ General Education

Enrollment 2017-2018 by English Language Learners

6, 1%
443, 99%

■ English Language Learner
■ Non-English Language Learner

Attendance

Attendance by Grade

Grade	'14-'15	'15-'16	'16-'17
K	94.8%	93.3%	91.9%
1	94.3%	95.2%	93.4%
2	95.4%	94.5%	94.2%
3	95.8%	95.4%	93.9%

Attendance Rate Trend

95.0% (2014-2015)
94.5% (2015-2016)
93.4% (2016-2017)

School Personnel
Teacher Count 2015-2016: 21

Teacher Count 2015-2016 by Ethnicity	*Teacher Count 2015-2016 by Years of Experience*

1, 5%

20, 95%

■ Black ■ White

2, 11% **1, 5%** **4, 21%**

7, 37%

5, 26%

■ 0-5 years ■ 6-10 years ■ 11-15 years
■ 16-20 years ■ 20+ years

Student Academic Performance

ISTEP+ 2016-2017 *Both English/Language Arts and Math*	*ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend* *Both English/Language Arts and Math*

13, 19%

54, 81%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass

27.3% **15.5%** **19.4%**

2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School

ISTEP+ 2016-2017: English/Language Arts	*ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend: English/Language Arts*

27, 40%

40, 60%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass

49.6% **42.3%** **40.3%**

2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School

ISTEP+ 2016-2017: Math	*ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend: Math*

13, 19%

54, 81%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass

29.0% **15.1%** **19.4%**

2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School

IREAD-3 2016-2017	IREAD-3 Percent Passing Trend

IREAD-3 2016-2017

Pie chart:
- 39, 58% (Pass)
- 28, 42% (Did Not Pass)

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass

IREAD-3 Percent Passing Trend

Bar chart with values:
- 2014-2015: 68.6% (School)
- 2015-2016: 76.3% (School)
- 2016-2017: 58.2% (School)

Y-axis: 0.0% to 100.0%

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School

IREAD-3 Percentage Promoted by Good Cause Exemptions 2016-2017	IREAD-3 Good Cause Promotion Exemption Trend

IREAD-3 Percentage Promoted by Good Cause Exemptions 2016-2017

Y-axis: 0 to 1

0

Percentage Promoted by Good Cause Exemptions

IREAD-3 Good Cause Promotion Exemption Trend

Bar chart with values:
- 2014-2015: 12.8%
- 2015-2016: 10.5%
- 2016-2017: 0.0%

Y-axis: 0.0% to 100.0%

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School

IV.   Evidence and Rating for School Turnaround Principle 3: Effective Instruction

Background
The next three sections of the report illustrate the Technical Assistance Team's key findings, supporting evidence, and overall rating for each of the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles.

To thoughtfully identify these prioritized Turnaround Principles, school and district leaders used a "Turnaround Principle Alignment Tool" provided by the Indiana State Board of Education to determine the two to three Turnaround Principles that most closely align with the goals and strategies outlined in the school's improvement plan.

This report focuses on these prioritized Turnaround Principles to provide a strategically targeted set of findings and recommendations. Additional evidence on the other five Turnaround Principles can be found in Appendix A of this report.

School Turnaround Principle 3: Effective Instruction			
Evidence Sources			
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan, Artifacts Provided by Marquette Montessori Academy			
Rating			
1 Ineffective *No evidence of this happening in the school*	2 Improvement Necessary *Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	3 Effective *Routine and consistent*	4 Highly Effective *Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			
Strengths			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• **Instruction is differentiated by interest and skill level as observed in almost all classroom observations.**			• TP 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.5
• **In 83% of the classrooms observed, students were actively engaged through a variety of instructional strategies.**			• TP 2.2, 3.2, 3.6
• **Students demonstrate traits of self-regulated learners as evidenced by many students on task and the need for teacher direction or redirection was minimal. Students independently get materials and use them to complete learning tasks.**			• TP 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.2, 3.6
Areas for Improvement			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)

• **Principal and teacher interviews revealed little evidence that the employed instructional strategies are intentionally chosen to meet student learning needs.**	• TP 3.1, 3.3, 3.5
• **Instruction is monitored infrequently, and teacher feedback is not focused on ensuring all students master the Indiana Academic Standards.**	• TP 3.1, 3.3, 3.5

V.   Evidence and Rating for School Turnaround Principle 4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention Systems

School Turnaround Principle 4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention Systems			
Evidence Sources			
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan, Artifacts Provided by Marquette Montessori Academy			
Rating			
1 Ineffective *No evidence of this happening in the school*	2 Improvement Necessary *Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	3 Effective *Routine and consistent*	4 Highly Effective *Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			
Strengths		Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)	
• **All classrooms are adequately equipped with Montessori instructional materials.**		• TP 2.1, 4.4,	
• **Whole group and small skill group instruction is employed in almost all classrooms.**		• TP 3.2	
• **Teachers consistently implement district provided benchmark assessments.**		• TP 4.3	
Areas for Improvement		Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)	
• **A pacing guide that is aligned with the Montessori philosophy and the Indiana Academic Standards does not exist.**		• TP 1.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5	
• **A formative assessment schedule aligned to the Montessori pacing guide is not in use.**		• TP 1.5, 1.6,	
• **There is no evidence in most classrooms of student progress being measured or aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards.**		• TP 3.1, 4.1, 4.2	

VI. Evidence and Rating for School Turnaround Principle 6: Enabling the Effective Use of Data

School Turnaround Principle 6: Enabling the Effective Use of Data			
Evidence Sources			
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan, Artifacts Provided by Marquette Montessori Academy			
Rating			
1 Ineffective *No evidence of this happening in the school*	2 Improvement Necessary *Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	3 Effective *Routine and consistent*	4 Highly Effective *Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			

Strengths	Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• **Data Wise training is district-wide and school is participating.**	• TP 5.3, 5.5
• **Multiple forms of assessment are provided by the district and used at regular intervals.**	• TP 4.3
Areas for Improvement	Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• **Data review protocols are not in place, therefore, data is rarely used to guide decision making about attendance and behavior**	• TP 6.2
• **Data is not used to inform adjustments in instruction.**	• TP 6.2, 6.3

VII. Recommendations

Background

This section outlines an intentionally targeted set of recommendations that align to one or more of the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles. Anchored in the United States Department of Education's Turnaround Principles framework, these recommendations are representative of what the Technical Assistance Team believes to be the most immediate changes needed to accelerate growth in academic and non-academic student outcomes at Marquette Montessori Academy. These recommendations should not be thought of as an exhaustive set of school improvement strategies, but rather as a part of the ongoing and continuous school improvement process.

Recommendation 1
Create a pacing guide that aligns the Montessori philosophy and materials with the Indiana Academic Standards. Furthermore, align the cycle of formative assessments with the Montessori-based pacing guide.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
TP 1.5, 1.6, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5
Rationale
The TAT team observed diverse classroom environments where 80% of students were actively engaged in learning activities and 92% of the interactions between teachers and students were positive and respectful. The team noted that teachers were interacting with students and supporting student use of the Montessori materials. The TAT team also observed data collection through multiple computer-based tools, but teachers reflected that since the tool did not align to the Montessori approach the data was only utilized by the district. As evidenced in the principal interview, teacher interview, and teacher focus group, teachers are unable to draw a direct connection between the Montessori curriculum materials and the Indiana Academic Standards. A deep knowledge of the Indiana Academic Standards would influence the effectiveness of the Montessori method's impact on achievement. Utilizing the expertize of the Marquette staff, a pacing guide and aligned cycle of formative assessments should be created for each grade level served at Marquette Montessori Academy. A systematic, building wide approach to implementing standards and conducting ongoing formative assessments will provide a foundational understanding for educators and continuity.

Recommendation 2
Develop and implement a cohesive system to analyze student data including attendance, behavior referrals, and academic progress. This system should be used school-wide to track students' progress towards mastery of the Indiana Academic Standards. Provide teachers and staff with ongoing professional development to ensure the expectations for tracking, analyzing, and acting on student academic and behavioral data are clear. Dedicate staff time for collaborative analysis of student-level data to determine the most appropriate course of action to support student achievement.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3
Rationale
The TAT team discussed the district provided Data Wise training with teachers, the principal, and central office staff. There was an air of excitement about the possibility of implementing such a systematic method for analyzing and using student data to inform instructional decisions. Similarly, there was disappointment about the lack of fidelity to the implementation which seemed to have started strong and then tapered off so that not one cycle was completed as planned. It was clear through conversations with the staff that a cohesive system to analyze attendance, behavior, and academic progress data does not exist. "A strong culture of data use, conveyed through a clear schoolwide vision, is critical to ensure that data-based decisions are made routinely, consistently, and effectively."[1] Based on classroom observations, the observation of a professional learning community and numerous discussions with teachers and the school leader, the current use of data to inform instructional decisions is not the prevalent culture and results in a lack of cohesion in regards to tier one instruction. "Carrying out data collection depends on considering the strengths, limitations, and timing of each data type and preparing data in a format that can reveal patterns in student achievement."[2] There does not appear to be a consistent method for this systematic data collection approach. Creating a data dashboard to collect and display information in a manner that is consumable to the staff is an essential step in targeting student achievement.

[1] Hamilton, L., Halverson, R., Jackson, S., Mandinach, E., Supovitz, J., and Wayman, J. (2009). Using student achievement data to support instructional decision making. U.S. Department of Education.
[2] Ibid.

Recommendation 3
Utilize attendance, behavior, and academic progress toward mastery of the Indiana Academic Standards data to drive the implementation of decisions regarding enrichment, remediation, and adjustments to instruction in order to meet rigorous academic expectations while supporting the academic growth and success of all students.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 2.3, 3.1, 3.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3,
Rationale

31% of teachers agree or strongly agree that data is used establish a coherent vision for the school. During the focus group, teachers reflected a coherent understanding of how the Montessori materials were to be used but were unable to draw the connection to what standards students were mastering while engaging with the materials. Staff also shared that little tracking of progress was implemented building wide.

"Reflective practice, requiring the individual to think about their work and consider improvements, is a researched proven tool that improves educator effectiveness."[3] Continuous improvement must be focused on data analysis and action planning followed by reflection on the success of the plan. An ongoing monitoring cycle ensures progress and identifies the need for action. It is essential that teachers understand where students are falling short of meeting a standard or where they are ready for new content.

The following steps are recommended to support the use of data.

1. At regular intervals, evaluate student level data in the context of mastery of the Indiana Academic Standards and in light of the expectations set forth in the pacing guide.
2. Set specific goals for growth towards mastery of standards for each student.
3. Make necessary and appropriate adjustments to instruction and provide additional supports based on the evaluation and goals.

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[3] Hinckely, P. (2012). Monitoring: Keeping your finger on the pulse of school improvement. Indianapolis: IBJ Book Publishing

VIII. Appendix A: Evidence for Remaining School Turnaround Principles

Background

We believe it is valuable for school and district leaders to have a summary of the TAT's findings and evidence for each of the eight Turnaround Principles. As such, this section of the report outlines key findings and supporting evidence for each of the Turnaround Principles that were not identified by school and district leaders as prioritized Turnaround Principles for this school.

This information is intentionally provided in an appendix to reinforce the importance of the previously stated findings, evidence, ratings, and recommendations for the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles.

School Turnaround Principle 1: School Leadership
Evidence Sources
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan, Artifacts Provided by Marquette Montessori Academy
Evidence Summary
Strengths   - Principal is well versed and passionate about the Montessori method and is able to articulate to teachers how they are showing fidelity to the philosophy.   - A Montessori coach is available for teachers to collaborate and work with.   - During focus group interviews, the parents and community members all felt that the principal was visible and concerned with the development of every student.   Areas for Improvement   17% of respondents to the teacher survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Our principal ensures students and teachers feel safe, welcome and ready to learn and teach."   - Although a coach is available to staff, there is not an expectation of how teachers should use the coach nor is job-embedded professional development a regular part of the coaching cycle.   - District expectations and requirements are not aligned with the Montessori philosophy and create confusion in the message teachers receive about priorities and areas of focus.

School Turnaround Principle 2: School Climate and Culture

Evidence Sources

Classroom observations, teacher focus groups, teacher surveys, student observations and interviews, Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan, Artifacts Provided by Marquette Montessori Academy

Evidence Summary

Strengths

- As observed by the Technical Assistance Team and reflected in the teacher survey, classrooms are attractive and stimulating environments.
- Consistent behavior expectations were observed by the team.
- Students seem to know how to work out issues and conflicts by using areas designed for conflict resolution in the classrooms.

Areas for Improvement

- Although few behavior disruptions to the learning were observed, during focus group and teacher interviews, the staff indicated a belief that student behavior was a significant barrier to teaching and learning.
- Despite a multi grade/age classroom philosophy, many teachers address students using conventional naming of grade level groups.

School Turnaround Principle 5: Effective Staffing Practices

Evidence Sources

Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan, Artifacts Provided by Marquette Montessori Academy

Evidence Summary

Strengths

- Many staff are trained in Montessori practice and believe in the philosophies.
- Principal has autonomy to choose her staff.
- There are lead teachers identified to serve as mentors and curriculum leaders.

Areas for Improvement

- Teachers are at various stages of training including complete, in process, and not started. This makes it difficult to find consistency in practice between classrooms.
- Staff indicated through interviews and focus groups that assistant positions have not been filled all year and make it difficult to fulfill philosophies of Montessori with only one adult in multi-age classrooms.
- Staffing practices dictated by the district as far as timing of when the school receives allocations and transfers makes it difficult to hire teachers with enough time to get the Montessori training required for successful implementation.

School Turnaround Principle 7: Effective Use of Time

Evidence Sources
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan, Artifacts Provided by Marquette Montessori Academy

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- The master schedule allows for the appropriate time block for the Montessori instructional method to be implemented.
- 78% of parents surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the school schedule is structured to meet the needs of all students.
- 72% of teachers surveyed somewhat agreed or agreed that the master schedule is clearly designed and structure to meet the needs of all students.

Areas for Improvement
- The professional learning community observed by the Technical Assistance Team did not involve professional learning but focused on operational and management issues.
- With part time related arts teachers, the staff sees a barrier with having to have special classes at varying times during the day.
- Students are often tardy to school and class with no consistency on how tardies are addressed or combatted.

School Turnaround Principle 8: Effective Family and Community Engagement

Evidence Sources
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan, Artifacts Provided by Marquette Montessori Academy

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- As evidenced by the parent survey, 85% of families agree or strongly agree that the school works with parents to build positive relationships and to engage parents as partners in their children's learning.
- Parents reported during the parent focus group the school staff are visible and welcoming.
- Based on community member focus group, there is significant community presence in the building working with students and staff on academic and social emotional development.

Areas for Improvement
- Teachers reported that many families are unclear about the tenets of the Montessori philosophy leading to confusion and discontentment with some of the practices.